

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks. For the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is allowable over the cited references.

The final Office Action dated April 27, 2004, indicated that claim 9 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten; claims 10-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112(2); claims 1-3, 7-8, 10-12 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Jacoby et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,501,527); and claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-12 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Jacoby* in view of *Rosenquist* (U.S. Patent No. 6,082,949).

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowance for claim 9 and has amended claim 9 to include limitations of the underlying claim. In view of the Examiner's indication of allowability, Applicant believes that claim 9 is now in condition for allowance.

Applicant has canceled claim 19, thus the rejection of claim 19 is moot.

With respect to the Section 112(2) rejection of claims 10 and 11, Applicant has amended claims 10 and 11 to remove the qualifying language "docking" and is now consistent with the language in the other claims as addressed by the Board.

Applicant respectfully traverses the prior art rejections (Sections 102(b) and 103(a)) because the Office Action fails to present a *prima facie* case of rejection. The Office Action fails to present a reference or combination of references that corresponds to the claimed invention. The Office Action fails to identify where the '527 reference teaches an inspection system as part of a reticle sorter having an input port and coupled between a reticle storing system and one or more photolithography exposure tools. The '527 reference is directed to transporting disks from a discharge cassette to a final location. Col. 2, lines 28-32. None of the cited portions of the '527 reference refer to an inspection system as part of a reticle sorter coupled to photolithography tools. The citation to column 7, lines 13-65 appears to refer to a final inspection of disks located at the end of the fabrication process. The Section 103(a) rejection relies on this misinterpretation of the '527 reference.

In view of the fact that the '527 embodiment is at an entirely different part of the fabrication process, the Office Action is not able to identify an input port of the reticle sorter, as claimed. The suction nozzle 14 of the '527 reference is located within the '527 sorter apparatus as shown in Figure 1. The nozzle is not an input to the sorter system.

Further, the Office Action fails to indicate where the '527 reference teaches sorting reticles within a cassette. The cited portions of the '527 reference teach removing a disk from a cassette and transporting the disk to a different cassette. There does not appear to be any sorting within a cassette. Without a presentation of correspondence to each of the claimed limitations, the Examiner has not satisfied the requirements for a *prima facie* rejection (for Section 102(b) or 103(a)) and the prior art rejections cannot be maintained. Applicant requests that the Section 102(b) and Section 103(a) rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the above discussion, Applicant believes that the rejection has been overcome and the application is in condition for allowance. A favorable response is requested. Should there be any remaining issues that could be readily addressed over the telephone, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (651) 686-6633.

Respectfully submitted,

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